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OUTLOOK NOTES

NO GREATER mistake can be made than to suppose that all of the problems connected with secondary school administration have now been pretty well solved. The master of a secondary school of the seventeenth century stepping into one of our secondary schools of today would certainly not feel at home, and it is equally certain that the schoolmaster of today would be bewildered and amazed should he drop into a secondary school of the twenty-first century. It is idle to speculate what the result may be by that time, but it is not difficult to see some of the present problems now before the secondary schools. Many of these have been most intelligently and helpfully considered by the Committee of Ten, and the Committee on College Entrance Requirements, but the ideals and programs of these two committees, in so far as they have received, or are receiving intellectual approval, are far from being as yet embodied in the actual work of the schools. What we know that is right, that we must seek to realize. Then, the preparation of teachers for secondary schools is a matter upon which the National Educational Association might well appoint another committee. The editor of the London *Educational Review* recently invited a school man in this country to prepare for him an article on the Training of Secondary Teachers in the United States, saying that as this was a question which

they were beginning to consider in England, he should be glad to assist the discussion there by publishing an account of what had been accomplished in this country. The person addressed has not yet written the article, and if any one who reads this note feels like undertaking the task, the commission will be gladly transferred. The System of Training of Secondary Teachers in Vogue in the United States—what a theme for the imagination, and *what* a theme for honest description! In the June SCHOOL REVIEW there was published the report of a committee appointed to inquire into the methods of certificating college graduates in the different states of the Union. Less than half the states, according to this investigation, make any provision whatever for the certificating of college and university graduates as teachers. This is certainly unjust to those graduates, and is often unjust to the secondary schools who seek their services in their higher positions.

We shall have to reckon from now on too with the whole question of commercial high schools which introduces a factor that will prove of growing importance into our field of secondary education; that is, unless we shall come to the undemocratic and un-American decision to divorce commercial education entirely from other fields of education, making it a thing apart. This will hardly be, for our universities have already decided against such a plan, the scope of the American university being large enough to include all human interests. Again, the whole subject of school hygiene must be worked over from the point of view of the secondary schools. There is no more reason why work should be carried on under unhygienic conditions in the high school and in the academy than in the kindergarten. The differentiation into different lines of preparation for different fields of activity in life, falls to a very large extent, upon the secondary school. Here those studies of the individual characteristics of pupils, which form a branch of child-study, assume the greatest importance and significance. Yet, they as yet receive very scant attention in secondary schools.

The courses of study are to have increased consideration, and among the several courses of study the one at present in

the most chaotic condition is the course in English. This course presents peculiar problems, most of which spring from the fact that English is a subject which the pupil already supposes he knows. How to teach what the pupil already knows is a harder problem even than how to teach what the teacher already does not know. It is quite possible that some maxims of quite universal acceptance are thoroughly wrong; for example, most of our high schools have practically a single session with a short intermission for lunch, and it has even been proposed to abolish this. If the studies made by scientists on fatigue and the conclusions of school hygiene in general show one thing clearly, it is that what is needed is longer, and not shorter, more frequent rather than less frequent intermissions. If we are now sacrificing the interests of the pupils' health to anyone's convenience, doubtless the time will come when we shall sacrifice the pupils' health for no one. Now very much reliance is placed upon home study. Fifty years from now it may be safely predicted that there will be no such thing. Have we solved the problem yet as to the use of libraries in secondary schools? Have we fully realized the fact that to teach pupils the art of reading, without at the same time providing an abundance of good reading, and compelling them to choose the good rather than the evil, may be quite as bad, if not worse, than leaving them in total ignorance of the art of reading? There have been many great and good men in the history of the world who could not read, and perhaps could not write even more than a single letter to stand for their names, and there have been very many villains who could read as well as you or I.

Then, too, there has been a good deal of talk about correlation of work in the schools, and in some places this came to more than talk, chiefly in the elementary schools, however. In the rage for specialization there is danger of our losing hold of the fact that there is such a thing as a synthesis of knowledge, that after all, the world is one. If the student does not get this idea as a result of his secondary course, he misses a large part of the value of that course. The suggestion has been made that the function of synthesizing should belong to the teacher of

English, that there all the branches of school instruction may be best correlated and the conception of the unity of knowledge best developed. Perhaps this is true, but in how many places has the experiment been tried? After all, there is much virtue in the notion of a "professor of things in general." The ethical value of the conception of knowledge as a unity, of the world of literature, science, art, politics, as a whole is something we cannot spare from the results of our school training.

This by no means exhausts the catalogue of duties next at hand in the secondary schools, but only suggests a few of them. There is enough to be done, then, so that the eager and ambitious need not turn aside from the field of secondary work because it offers no attractions in the way of opportunities for the exercise of constructive powers.

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